

# MANGIA BENE

INCORPORATED  
RESTAURANT MANAGEMENT GROUP

3317 North State Street • Jackson, MS 39216  
601-982-4443

July 11, 2023

Honorable Judge Henry T. Wingate  
501 East Court Street  
Jackson, MS 39201

Dear Judge Wingate:

I am writing to share my honest assessment as to the performance of JXN Water, the new non-profit entity your court has been central in overseeing for the ongoing managing of the City of Jackson's troubled water system.

As you may know, I am a restaurateur here in the city of Jackson and have been so for thirty years. BRAVO! opened in 1994, Broad Street in 1998, and Sal & Mookie's in 2007. I have operated under nine different City of Jackson Mayors: Ditto, Johnson, Melton, Bluntson (temporary after Melton's death) Johnson (term 3), C. Lumumba, Tillman (temporary after Lumumba's death), Yarber and A. Lumumba.

I have watched the population of Jackson drop from a zenith of 202,000 to 145,000 as of the April 2023 census update. Our K-12 public school enrollment has dropped from 33,000 scholars to 18,500, our police force is the smallest it has ever been, and our city budget has been balanced by borrowing and one-time revenue sources. What started as white flight of the 1980s and 1990s has been replaced with black middle-class flight in the 2010s and 2020s, and, as a result, we have been named the fastest shrinking city in the nation.

All of this has culminated in a broken water system that gained the attention of the world last summer, and resulted in the brokered deal between the EPA, the DOJ, your court, and the City of Jackson.

**I, for one am incredibly thankful for the creation of JXN Water and the rapid and exceptional turnaround of operations that I have personally experienced. To support this statement, let me specifically share three recent water supply and quality issues my businesses have experienced, what we did, what we were told, and what happened.**



At 6 a.m. Sunday morning June 4<sup>th</sup>, I received a phone call from my opening manager at Broad Street reporting that we had little to no water pressure. I waited until 7 a.m. to contact the leadership at JXN Water (this was prior to the 24 x 7 call line now in place). By 8:30 a.m. they had the water break located (a major blow out on Old Canton Road ½ mile from Broad Street, but big enough to drain our building) and by 10 a.m. we had full water pressure. Three hours from phone call to fixed, all on a Sunday morning! This is completely foreign to me, as I was prepared to close our business as usual when we don't have water. Judge Wingate, we have suffered twenty-nine days of closures and more than twelve total weeks of boil water notices at Broad Street over the last four years due to no water pressure, but this time we didn't have to close; JXN Water kept us going.

At 7:45 a.m. Tuesday morning, June 27<sup>th</sup>, I called the newly minted JXN Water hotline and reported that once again, Broad Street was without water pressure. The phone was answered promptly, and a very competent customer service representative took all my information, told me what would happen next, and asked for my cell number to give me updates. Incredible! When I received the promised call back, they informed me that there was as huge water main break on Kings Highway ¾ a mile from Broad Street, which was large enough to negatively impact our building pressure. By 9 a.m. our water pressure was returned to 100%, and all this happened in a little over one hour from my initial call. In the past, we would have closed and hoped for good news within 24-36 hours. Truly remarkable!

Finally, just a few days ago, I called the JXN Water hotline to report dirty water coming out of the facets at Broad Street. The representative took my information, and a few hours later the water was clear. I have no idea if JXN Water did anything. All I know is the problem was solved. Magic? Maybe. Competence and follow through? CERTAINLY.

These three real stories highlight one theme: FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS THE WATER SYSTEM IS WORKING. I beg you to not only allow JXN Water to continue its incredible work, but to do all in your power to help our community understand just how significant the work is.

*JXN Water is fixing Jackson Water. It is that simple a message, and yet so incredibly profound.*

Judge Wingate, I am at your service if you would ever like to talk, or talk to some of my employees, all who are thankful for running water so we can stay open and earn our living as agents of hospitality in Jackson, Mississippi.

Sincerely yours,



Jeff Good



## Mississippi State Senate

SENATOR JOHN HORHN

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July 10, 2023

The Honorable Henry T. Wingate  
United States District Court Judge  
501 East Court Street, Suite 6.750  
Jackson, Mississippi 39201

Dear Judge Wingate:

This letter supports the efforts made thus far by Ted Henifin whom you appointed last winter to serve as Interim Third Party Manager of the City of Jackson's drinking water and billing and collections at the Jackson Water and Sewer Administration.

Since his work is so vital to the well-being of my constituents, I have been in close communication with Mr. Henifin since his arrival. I have found him to be frank, forthcoming, and extremely competent in the pursuit of his assignment to fix Jackson's drinking water problems in both the short and long term. He has willingly attended meetings I've arranged for the Jackson Legislative Delegation, constituents, and the business community. Minority business development has been of keen interest to me for more than three decades, and I'm encouraged by Mr. Henifin's use of black-owned professional firms and construction contracts in carrying out some of his community engagement, outreach, engineering, and construction activities. I believe he's aware that more efforts are needed in this regard; in fact, we have discussed ways to establish mentor/protegee relationships to help build more capacity among local businesses.

Mr. Henifin has always shown himself to be accessible and transparent about his work and what he's doing to right the ship in Jackson. I'm aware of a number of community meetings he has attended. He makes himself available to the media, including having appeared several times on my own regional radio show which airs on the largest community-owned radio station in the state.

Based on his experience, expertise and professional disposition, I believe Ted Henifin is the right man for the job as ITPM and that he should be given every opportunity to finish what you have charged him to do with as little interference as possible.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

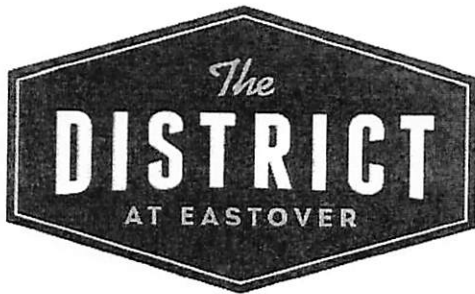
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Horhn", written over a horizontal line.

John Horhn

JH/rdm





601.914.0800

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308 E. Pearl Street  
Suite 200  
Jackson, MS 39201

July 10, 2023

Mr. Ted Henifin

Manager

Jxn Water

**Via Email:** [ted@jxnwater.com](mailto:ted@jxnwater.com)

Re: Stipulated Order, City of Jackson Drinking Water and Billing Systems

Dear Mr. Henifin,

We are one of the largest property tax payers in the City of Jackson, whose business is the development, ownership and operation of The District at Eastover. The District at Eastover is a mixed-use development containing residential, office, retail, restaurants and a hotel located on Interstate 55 in Jackson. We are the single largest new development in the City of Jackson in the last 10 years, possibly longer, and generate significant sales taxes which support the City and its residents.

Our success depends solely on businesses who want to locate at our development, to serve the residents located both in the City of Jackson and those who come in from neighboring areas. When the water system failed, the businesses located at The District at Eastover suffered mightily. Our ability to attract new businesses to the development ground to a halt.

I'm writing you today to let you know that since you were appointed by the Federal Court, and as a result of the remarkable progress your team has made in a short period of time, faith is being restored in our customers' ability to not only survive, but to once again thrive, and we are seeing interest from businesses looking to locate in Jackson for the first time since the water crises began. The reliability of the water system is paramount to a potential business, or resident's, decision on where to locate.

Prior to Jxn Water taking over, we had little to no luck when we contacted the City of Jackson regarding water or billing issues. However, since the Jxn Water call center has opened, our calls have been answered on the first ring and the call center attendees have been extraordinarily knowledgeable, patient, and helpful, with a 100% response rate to our issues within one day's time. This is quite a welcome change and is the level of service we get in other southeastern cities where we own commercial properties.

I want to thank you and your team, along with our Congressional representation in Washington, D.C. and the Biden Administration, for the commitment made to the City of Jackson water system repairs. The work Jxn Water has done thus far is nothing short of monumental, given the condition of the system you started with. I know there is much work yet to be done by your team, but we steadfastly support your efforts and have faith in your ability to successfully manage us through to resolution of the Stipulated Order and restoring the reliable delivery of clean water to all of Jackson's residents.

The City of Jackson is a place with much to offer. We are located amongst some of the fastest growing areas of the United States, the literal crossroads of the southeast; there is no reason Jackson should not share in that success, to the benefit of all of its residents and the State as a whole. Such success begins with the restoration of public trust in the basics of government responsibilities: infrastructure and public safety. The work of Jxn Water is a critical component of restoring that public trust, and we sincerely thank you and your team for your tireless efforts.

Most Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Breck Hines". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Breck" being more prominent than the last name "Hines".

Breck R. Hines  
Co-Owner & Manager